



News Release

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UDOH Provides Lifesaving Heart Defibrillators to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts

Additional AEDs Available for Rural Areas

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health’s (UDOH) Bureau of Emergency Medical Services is providing two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to the Great Salt Lake Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of Utah. The two lifesaving AEDs will be placed at the Steiner Boy Scout Camp and Cloud Rim Girl Scout Camp. In addition, the UDOH is making AEDs available to rural communities.

AEDs are small, lightweight devices that look at a person’s heart rhythm. If a person is in sudden cardiac arrest, the AED can shock the person’s heart back into rhythm. Sudden cardiac arrest claims more than 340,000 lives each year, primarily because lifesaving treatment, or use of AED, does not reach the victims within the first critical minutes.

“We are delighted to provide AEDs to the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts in Utah as well as to rural communities,” said Jan Buttrey, Director of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, UDOH. “Placing AEDs in rural areas will reduce response time and help victims of sudden cardiac arrest within the first critical minutes.”

Todd Hyer, a Captain paramedic/firefighter for Sandy City Fire Department, is alive today because of immediate CPR and quick access to an AED. While refereeing a soccer game in May of 1997, Todd collapsed and went into sudden cardiac arrest. Fortunately bystanders began CPR. Within minutes, paramedics arrived with an AED and quickly went into action. They shocked Todd a total of 6 times. Finally his heart stabilized.

The CPR and quick access to an AED saved Todd’s life, but his story doesn’t stop there. Three years ago while refereeing at another soccer game, a “soccer dad” went into

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sudden cardiac arrest and collapsed. Todd immediately began CPR until paramedics arrived at the soccer field. The “soccer dad” survived and one year later the two reunited to commemorate their “chain of survival.”

Todd’s story emphasizes how life-saving CPR and quick access to an AED can make a difference in not just one life, but many. Today, Todd continues working and saving lives at the Sandy City Fire Department.

Rural communities interested in having an AED are encouraged to apply through the UDOH. The goal of the program is to place AEDs in rural areas to reduce response time and to build community awareness of how AEDs can save lives. Within the last three years the UDOH has already placed 348 AED machines in 71 cities and 24 counties throughout Utah.

For further information on the grant application process and how to receive an AED for your community, please contact the UDOH, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, Riki Rice, (801) 538-6028 or visit the Bureau of EMS website at: www.health.utah.gov/ems and click Rural Access to Emergency Devices.

Editor’s Note: Todd Hyer, mentioned in the above story is available for media interviews on Tuesday, September 27, 2005. To reach Todd, contact Cody Craynor at 538-6232.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.